



**Testimony of AARP on SB 23  
An Act Concerning Emergency Preparedness and Response**

**Energy and Technology Committee  
March 20, 2012**

AARP is an organization that helps people 50+ live their best life. We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan social mission organization with nearly 600,000 Connecticut members.

The public understands that utilities cannot guarantee uninterrupted service for every single day and every single hour. We expected that major storms will produce outages and that power restoration can sometimes take more time than we would all like, especially when power lines and distribution poles must be repaired. However, when outages are frequent and/or lengthy and when utility customer communications about outages is poor or nonexistent, customer frustration increases. Even worse, these conditions create potentially dangerous health and safety concerns for customers, including customers who are the most vulnerable within our community, i.e., young children, the medically frail, and those aged 65 and older who need access to heat in the winter, cooling in the summer, and power to operate needed medical equipment as part of their daily living.

AARP supports the concepts laid out in Senate Bill 23. The proposal is a good first step towards dealing with emergency preparedness. We do, however, feel that House Bill 5544 is a much more comprehensive piece of legislation. AARP would be happy to work with the DEEP and the Energy and Technology Committee to produce the most comprehensive storm response legislation this year that would protect ratepayers.

AARP's goals for storm preparation and response legislation include:

- **PURA should develop standards for storm and emergency preparedness and response;**
- **Utilities should be required to develop and submit for approval an emergency response plan pursuant to the standards;**
- **Utilities should be required to regularly report on response to storms and other emergencies; and**
- **Standards should be enforceable and utilities should be subject to penalties for failure to comply.**